

REMARKS

In response to the Final Office Action mailed June 29, 2009, the Assignee (Nuance Communications, Inc.) respectfully requests reconsideration. Claims 1-17 were previously pending in this application. By this amendment, claim 17 is amended. No claims are added or canceled. As a result, claims 1-17 are pending for examination, with claims 1, 2, and 7 being independent.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §103

The Office Action rejects claims 1-8, 13, 14 and 17 (including independent claims 1, 2, and 7) are under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as purportedly being obvious over International Application No. WO 01/31634 ("Mishelevich") in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,794,189 ("Gould"). The Assignee respectfully traverses these rejections.

A. The Purported Combination of Mishelevich and Gould Fails to Disclose or Suggest All Limitations of Independent Claims 1, 2, and 7

i. Independent Claim 1

Claim 1 includes a limitation that recites, "...a lexicon of alternatives, the lexicon of alternatives comprising a plurality of entries, at least some of which are displayed by the correction device as alternatives to individual word parts, words and/or word sequences of the recognized text, **wherein at least some of the plurality of entries in the lexicon of alternatives are updated based on information about at least one previous correction made by the correction device** (emphasis added)." Neither Mishelevich nor Gould discloses or suggests the above-highlighted limitation of claim 1.

The Office Action concedes that Mishelevich does not disclose this limitation, but asserts that Gould discloses it at Col. 11, lines 21-26, and Figs. 1 and 3 (Office Action, page 3). The Assignee respectfully disagrees.

Gould is directed to a continuous speech recognition system which includes modification procedures that refrain from training speech models when the modification procedures do not correct a speech recognition error (Gould, abstract). During correction of speech recognition errors,

the results of the corrections are used to retrain the speech models used for speech recognition to improve future performance of the speech recognition system (Gould, col. 1, lines 22-25). However, during the correction process, users often change their mind regarding previously entered text and replace one or more previously entered words with different words that have unrelated content (Gould, col. 1, lines 38-42). If these content-changing corrections were used to retrain the speech models, this “misadaptation” would degrade the integrity of the speech models and reduce speech recognition accuracy (Gould, col. 1, lines 48-50). To circumvent this problem, the system of Gould only retrains the speech models when it is determined that the modification was made to correct a speech recognition error (abstract).

Some portions of Gould are directed to a short term speech recognition error correction procedure in which a user is allowed to correct speech recognition errors in a predetermined number of the user’s last utterances (Gould, col. 9, lines 47-49). Specifically, the portions of Gould cited by the Office Action refer to modifying displayed text and training the speech models of the speech recognition system if a user agrees with a correction proposed by the system of Gould (Gould, col. 11, lines 21-26). That is, when a user agrees with a proposed correction, the system of Gould determines that this modification was made to correct a speech recognition error (rather than to change content) and information about a comparison between the selected correction and the original text is used to retrain the speech models to improve future speech recognition.

The Office Action appears to assert that the vocabulary 40 and/or the common vocabulary 48 of Gould is a lexicon of alternatives (Office Action, page 3). The Assignee respectfully submits that although the common vocabulary 48 of Gould includes speech models in addition to words, sentences, and groups, only the words, sentences, or groups, but not the speech models, are potential candidates to replace a misrecognized word in the input text (Gould, Figs. 10c-10e). Even if the vocabulary 40 and/or the common vocabulary 48 of Gould were to be considered a lexicon of alternatives, which the Assignee does not concede, Gould fails to disclose or suggest that **at least some of the plurality of entries** in the vocabulary 40/48 are updated based on information about at least one previous correction made by the correction device, as required by claim 1. Rather, when the system of Gould determines that a modification was made to correct a speech recognition error,

the speech models (not the vocabulary) are retrained to improve future speech recognition, but the entries in the vocabulary 40/48 remain unchanged.

For at least these reasons, claim 1 patentably distinguishes over the combination of Mishelevich and Gould and it is respectfully requested that the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §103 be withdrawn.

ii. Independent Claim 2

Claim 2 is directed to a correction device and recites, "...a lexicon of alternatives comprising a plurality of entries, at least some of which are displayed by the correction device as alternatives to individual word parts, words and/or word sequences of the recognized text, **wherein at least some of the plurality of entries in the lexicon of alternatives are updated based on information about at least one previous correction made by the correction device** (emphasis added)."

As should be appreciated from the foregoing, claim 2 patentably distinguishes over the combination of Mishelevich and Gould and it is respectfully requested that the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §103 be withdrawn. Claims 3-6 depend from claim 2 and are allowable for at least the same reasons.

iii. Independent Claim 7

Claim 7 recites, "...wherein the list of alternatives in the entry is based at least in part on at least one previous correction of the recognized text."

As should be appreciated from the foregoing, claim 7 patentably distinguishes over the combination of Mishelevich and Gould and it is respectfully requested that the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §103 be withdrawn. Claims 8-17 depend from claim 7 and are allowable for at least the same reasons.

General Comments on Dependent Claims

Since each of the dependent claims depends from a base claim that is believed to be in condition for allowance, for the sake of brevity, the Assignee believes that it is unnecessary at this

time to argue the further distinguishing features of the dependent claims. However, the Assignee does not necessarily concur with the interpretation of the previously presented dependent claims as set forth in the Office Action, nor does the Assignee concur that the basis for rejection of any of the previously presented dependent claims is proper. Therefore, the Assignee reserves the right to specifically address the further patentability of the dependent claims in the future.


CONCLUSION

In view of the above amendment, the Assignee believes the pending application is in condition for allowance. A Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested. The Examiner is requested to call the undersigned at the telephone number listed below if this communication does not place the case in condition for allowance.

If this response is not considered timely filed and if a request for an extension of time is otherwise absent, the Assignee hereby requests any necessary extension of time. If there is a fee occasioned by this response, including an extension fee, the Director is hereby authorized to charge any deficiency or credit any overpayment in the fees filed, asserted to be filed, or which should have been filed herewith to our Deposit Account No. 23/2825, under Docket No. N0484.70060US00 from which the undersigned is authorized to draw.

Dated: August 31, 2009

Respectfully submitted,
Nuance Communications, Inc.

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